

# THE OAK RIDGER

## Time for Leadership

By Ellen Rogers | Oak Ridger Staff

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U.S. Rep. Zach Wamp visited Oak Ridge Monday afternoon before traveling to the University of Tennessee to deliver the first Baker Center Address on Energy Policy at the Clarence Brown Theatre.

Wamp toured the Center for Entrepreneurial Growth facility, located in Commerce Park, before he arrived at UT's campus early Monday evening. He was introduced to the world's largest chamber scanning electron microscope, which allows scientists to diagnose surface abnormalities in ways that have never been possible before.



Scott Fraker/Staff

Congressman Zach Wamp, left, visited Oak Ridge Monday and made a stop at the Center for Entrepreneurial Growth facility to take a look at a large scanning electron microscope. Second from right, Steven J. Dekanich, large chamber scanning electron microscope project lead at BWXT Y-12, explains the functions of the instrument to the congressman. Also present were Jaret J. Frafjord, large chamber scanning electron microscope subject matter expert, second from left, and Kevin Finney, division manager for applied technology, far right, both of BWXT Y-12.

"We're very pleased with the results so far," said Steve Dekanich, LC-SEM project lead.

Former Sen. Howard Baker was on hand Monday at UT to introduce Wamp, who was feeling under the weather but was "determined" to be there to share his thoughts with the public on energy policies.

"The challenges facing energy are incredible opportunities for America," Wamp said. "The Energy Bill is a step in the right direction. It's a good final product, but there's still so much to do."

The bill does more for the electricity sector than the transportation sector, he continued. Today, 58 percent of all petroleum is imported, and that amount is expected to increase 10 percent in the next decade.

"Not only are we too reliant on foreign oil, but the trends are not good, either. In the short run, we have to work to increase capacity, to bring the (gas) prices down. We need the best negotiating skills, especially when we're in the middle of a global war on terror."

Wamp predicted more people would move toward efficiency, mainly in the form of hybrid vehicles. Still, "the economic strain put on our country could be disastrous," he said.

"The price you pay at the pump is just the tip of the iceberg. In the long term, we absolutely have to make some changes in each of our households, and the sooner, the better. We need to challenge ourselves to have an Apollo-like mission."

Wamp praised nuclear energy, which he noted was controversial in the U.S. but not in France.

"The French get over 70 percent of their energy from nuclear power because they're not afraid of it. They don't bury their waste, they reprocess it. We need to follow the leadership of some of our foreign friends."

Natural gas is another strain on the U.S. economy, he continued.

"Unless we have relief, more and more industries are going to move back to coal or move to coal. Liquefied natural gas has the potential to help us, but it's not yet cost-effective. We need to make this a priority of our country."

Wamp spoke of a future with hydrogen energy stations that can provide both vehicle fueling and electrical power.

"These technologies need to be fed, they need to be promoted, they need to be accelerated."

"The world is watching," Wamp said. "I think the world is even wondering, 'What is the U.S. going to do from 2005 to 2015 in regards to energy?' It's time for leadership like we've never seen before."